UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/ICEF/1996/P/L.19/Add.1
6 June 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Executive Board
Third regular session 1996
16-19 September 1996
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

FOR ACTION

COUNTRY PROGRAMME RECOMMENDATION**

Costa Rica

Addendum

SUMMARY

The present addendum to the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session in January 1996 contains the final country programme recommendation for Board approval.

It contains a recommendation for funding the country programme of Costa Rica which has an annual planning level of $1,000,000 or less. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the amount of $3,750,000 from general resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $3,750,000 in supplementary funds, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 1997 to 2001.

* E/ICEF/1996/18.

** The original country note provided only indicative figures for estimated programme cooperation. The figures provided in the present addendum are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 1995. They will be contained in the "Summary of 1996 recommendations for general resources and supplementary funding programmes" (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.2).

/...

BASIC DATA
(1994 unless otherwise stated)

Child population (millions, 0-15 years)	1.25
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	16
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	14
Underweight (% moderate and severe) (1993)	2
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (1990)	55
Literacy (% male/female) (1995)	95/95
Primary school enrolment (% net, male/female) (1991)	87/88
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1993)	86
Access to safe water (%) (1993)	96
Access to health services (%) (1980)	80
GNP per capita	$ 2,380

One-year-olds fully immunized against (1995):

tuberculosis:	99 per cent
diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus:	85 per cent
measles:	94 per cent
poliomyelitis:	84 per cent

Pregnant women immunized against:

tetanus:	..

THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN

1. Costa Rica has been seen as a model for social development and has made enormous advances. Longstanding massive social investment has allowed the country to achieve many of the mid-decade goals. However, the sustainability of these gains is not guaranteed, nor is the achievement of all the goals for the year 2000. In addition to financial constraints, two factors threaten sustainability: the lack of institutional evaluation capacity to ensure effectiveness and efficiency (e.g., the monitoring of micronutrients); and the lack of meaningful community participation.

2. There are still sizeable inequities affecting children. According to the most recent government estimates, poverty affects 30 per cent of children. In some poor urban communities and border areas, infant and maternal mortality rates are four times the national average. The number of vulnerable children - those who are economically exploited, in conflict with the law and children of immigrants - is growing. Social vulnerability of adolescents is determined by factors such as low secondary school coverage (55 per cent nationally, 30 per cent in rural areas), a high incidence of teenage pregnancies and the lack of paternal responsibility. Poor children face additional risks due to environmental degradation.

3. With support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank, the Government is undertaking sweeping social sector reforms to improve the quality and coverage of education, strengthen primary health services and modernize the criminal justice system. At the centre of the reform process is the commitment to reducing inequities, ensuring financial sustainability of

programmes and eliciting community involvement in planning and evaluation. The challenge is to safeguard achievements of the past, while ensuring that the rights of children are paramount on the social reform agenda.

PROGRAMME COOPERATION, 1992-1996

4. The 1992-1996 country programme focused on providing support for the achievement of the mid-decade goals, emphasizing the reduction of disparities in vulnerable communities. The social policy programme provided technical support for the formulation of the national programme of action (NPA). However, in spite of the efforts supported by the health programme, information systems still need to be improved for monitoring the goals for micronutrients and maternal mortality. The water and sanitation programme focused in part on indigenous populations, providing supplies and promoting education programmes in 20 communities of Talamanca (one of the poorest border areas of the country). This programme also supported the Government's project of "healthy schools", with a view to improving the hygiene sanitation conditions and practices in more than 50 poor urban and rural schools. The education programme promoted innovations to improve the quality of rural education in 29 schools. As a result of advocacy by UNICEF, the Ministry of Education created a department for indigenous education. The Ministry also revised school textbooks in addressing gender stereotypes in the curriculum.

5. The programme for children in especially difficult circumstances played a catalytic role in incorporating a rights approach into the national legal reform process. It also helped to strengthen national capacity to monitor the status of institutionalized and working children. The ground breaking Child Rights Audit (an initiative that consists of community-based evaluations of child rights in poor communities) demonstrated the potential to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child through participative methodologies. These efforts will be complemented by the Child Development Indicator (an instrument which gauges the country's progress on child rights, similar to the Human Development Index), which is being developed and applied with support from the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Lessons learned

6. The mid-term review found that the country programme was spread too thinly (5 programmes, 15 projects) to achieve substantive results, and instead should be based on demonstrably high-impact activities with fewer and more focused objectives. Furthermore, given the shifting of the country's focus beyond child survival issues, the programme should concentrate on child development, protection and participation. This implies expanding the circle of partnerships beyond the Government to include civil society and the Defensoría de los Habitantes (Ombudsman's Office). Monitoring and evaluation efforts should be further improved to achieve great transparency and programme accountability and to encourage community participation. Improved communication and social mobilization would benefit from the comparative advantage UNICEF has in fostering community participation and in facilitating initiatives between civil society and the Government for the promotion of children's and adolescents' rights. Targeted support to innovative local projects should continue to play a prominent role in UNICEF cooperation within the social reform. Greater support must be provided to initiatives that will focus such gender-related issues as early pregnancy, men's parental skills and family responsibilities, and domestic violence.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAMME COOPERATION, 1997-2001

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total
General resources						
Targeted support to planning and institutional reform	314	292	297	291	289	1 483
Communication and mobilization	140	130	132	130	129	661
Programme support	296	328	321	329	332	1 606
Subtotal	750	750	750	750	750	3 750
Supplementary funding						
Targeted support to planning and institutional reform	478	497	494	494	495	2 458
Communication and mobilization	215	213	212	212	212	1 064
Programme support	57	40	44	44	43	228
Subtotal	750	750	750	750	750	3 750
Total	1 500	1 500	1 500	1 500	1 500	7 500

7. The country programme preparation process was coordinated jointly by the Ministerio de Planificación (MIDEPLAN) (Ministry of Planning), the Second Vice-Presidency (Coordinator of the Social Cabinet) and UNICEF. The main social sector ministries also played an active role. Major bilateral donors were consulted on strategy and regarding such specific initiatives as reproductive health in poor urban communities (Canada, European Union), quality of primary education and gender issues (Netherlands), local rural development projects (Canada, France, Germany and Japan) and monitoring child rights (Canada, Japan, Netherlands). Other United Nations agencies, the development banks and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) helped to clarify areas of complementarity and comparative advantage.

8. The Government has stated that cooperation in the social sector should be oriented by the following goals: (a) promotion of sustainable social development; (b) ensuring equal access to quality services; (c) development of social programmes based on intersectoral approaches; and (d) encouragement of greater community involvement in decision-making. These goals, in addition to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, provide Costa Rica with a policy framework to promote children and women's rights.

9. Within this framework, the programme objectives are: (a) to support the Government in refocusing major social policies and the NPA goals using the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a framework; (b) to develop rights-based monitoring and evaluation systems at both national and municipal levels; (c) to support innovative local projects that reduce inequities in poor

urban communities and border areas; (d) to systematize innovations and exchange experiences within Costa Rica and with other countries; and (e) to foster civil society and children's and women's participation in social planning and evaluation.

10. Strategies for social mobilization will be reinforced by the funding of monitoring and evaluation activities. The central tenet of the strategy mix is to build incrementally central and local governmental capacities in the monitoring and evaluation of child rights and to support community participation processes in order to enhance the impact of social policies. Technical assistance will be provided to harmonize public policies and the NPA with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Advocacy interventions will seek to mobilize the Government and civil society in support of rights-based policies. The fact that this advocacy will have a much stronger empirical base, acquired through evaluation, will add considerably to its impact. Systematic, community-based evaluation of programme impact, knowledge acquired from child rights evaluations and the strengthening of children's voices in decision-making will all contribute to the reduction of inequities and more potent, sustainable community participation.

11. Given the innovative nature of this country programme (its focus on changing attitudes, knowledge and institutional practices), during the first two years emphasis will be put on operational research. This will imply a "learning by doing" approach. This time-span will be valuable as UNICEF and partners will determine what works best and systematize methodologies to address pressing issues facing children and youth.

Targeted support to planning and institutional reform

12. This programme is intended to strengthen state and municipal capacity to deal with children's issues from a rights perspective. It will be implemented through the three projects described below.

13. Promotion of a rights approach in public policies. The social sector reform presents a unique opportunity for revising public policies, particularly those on education, health and child protection, using the two Conventions as a framework. Specific activities will include: the establishment of formal, broad-based committees to revise existing policies and propose reforms based on a rights approach; public discussions and sectoral workshops on the reforms proposed; and advocacy with the highest political authorities for the adoption of policy reforms. UNICEF also will provide technical assistance to help the Government in refocusing the NPA using the two Conventions as a framework. This refocusing will entail: identification of new goals about emerging rights issues; workshops to identify strategies for achieving those goals of the World Summit for Children where there are inequities or sustainability challenges (infant and maternal mortality, immunization, micronutrients); and meetings between government authorities and grass-roots groups to build a national consensus around the NPA. The refocusing of the NPA will strengthen policy reform efforts by setting goals that can be used as milestones to evaluate the impact of rights-based policies. MIDEPLAN, the Ministries of Education and Health, the judicial system and NGOs will play an important role in this process.

14. Monitoring and evaluation of children's and women's rights. This project seeks to strengthen institutional capacity to monitor and evaluate children's and women's rights at both national and municipal levels. Evaluation efforts will be concentrated on the rights to education, health and protection against

economic exploitation, placing special emphasis on gender and immigration status where vital. The effects of environmental degradation on children's well-being also will be monitored. A by-product of this process will be the systematization of successful innovations (especially those dealing with adolescents issues).

15. At the national level, monitoring and evaluation efforts will include: continued production of progress reports on the World Summit for Children goals; helping the Government to prepare and follow up to reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child; studies on emerging issues affecting adolescents and on those World Summit goals where concerns exist over disparity reduction and sustainability; and consolidation of the Child Development Indicator. These activities will be undertaken together with MIDEPLAN and the counterpart offices in relevant public institutions.

16. At the municipal level, core funding will provide for small-scale implementation of the Child Rights Audit in five communities, beginning in Puriscal and two areas along the Nicaraguan border; supplementary funds would allow for expansion to other areas. Special emphasis will be given to measure the effects of environmental degradation on children's welfare; to evaluate cost-effectiveness and coverage of basic social services; and to identify obstacles to community participation. The major output of this process (beyond the evaluations themselves) will be the building of local capacities to monitor child rights in vulnerable communities and to use the information in developing local plans of action. The Child Rights Audit will be coordinated with the Ombudsman's Office, other United Nations agencies, local councils and grass-roots organizations and will involve regional and national authorities when appropriate.

17. Innovative approaches to rights issues in poor communities. UNICEF will support innovative cost-effective projects dealing with child rights issues affecting poor urban communities and border areas. Particular support will be provided to systematize new approaches seeking the fulfilment of adolescents' rights in those communities. The systematic evaluation of these projects will yield lessons learned to help shape social policy reforms and to stimulate going-to-scale processes. Community-based evaluations also will lead to broader social participation in decision-making.

18. Two initiatives already have been targeted for support. Supplementary funds will be used to expand these initiatives. First, a project in the rural community of Puriscal aims to generate broader respect for children's rights by improving the sanitary conditions and quality of primary education in 29 rural schools; changing teachers' and children's attitudes that legitimize discrimination against women and girls; and carrying out Child Rights Audits. The Puriscal project will be used as a model to improve the quality of rural education and highlight the role of local authorities in promoting initiatives in favour of children and adolescents.

19. A second project will be developed in the Pavas section of San Jose as part of a United Nations inter-agency intervention. An umbrella network of governmental agencies and NGOs to be developed will foster comprehensive intersectoral approaches to working with adolescents; promote healthy lifestyles for youth (including information on AIDS and early pregnancy); and reinforce the importance of male parenting and giving adolescent girls greater choices. The specific role of UNICEF in the inter-agency intervention will be, first, to facilitate the formation of the umbrella network, and then to organize communication workshops on participative planning and monitoring techniques. Systematic monitoring of the Pavas project will shed light on successful

methodologies and practices that can be replicated in similar communities through going-to-scale processes. The main counterparts in both undertakings will be the local government officials and community organizations and NGOs. Coordination with central government authorities will be crucial for sustainability of local efforts and for directing institutional responses.

Communication and mobilization of civil society

20. The programme's five objectives are: (a) to create partnerships among social groups in support of public policies and programmes based on a rights approach; (b) to stimulate community involvement in local planning and evaluation; (c) to foster the participation and expression of children and adolescents in the promotion of their rights, using the Child Rights Audit and other new methodologies; (d) to disseminate innovations and promote exchanges of experiences; and (e) to mobilize resources from donors and the private sector.

21. The programme will support: (a) the building of networks with leading NGOs, opinion leaders, universities, churches and civic institutions to create synergism and consensus around emerging issues; (b) mass media and other communication campaigns to raise families' awareness of children's rights; (c) lobbying campaigns to involve civil society and grass-roots groups in policy reform efforts; and (d) surveys, workshops and other appropriate forums to strengthen the voice of children and adolescents in national and local decision-making processes. Supplementary funding will support special communication efforts to highlight such issues as the situation of immigrant children, child labour and environmental degradation. The main partners in this programme will be the Ombudsman's Office, leading NGOs, churches and the media.

22. Subregional initiatives. The country programme will coordinate efforts with UNICEF subregional programmes in micronutrients and water and sanitation in order to: develop strategies to reduce disparities regarding micronutrients (particularly iron deficiency) and environmental sanitation goals; strengthen monitoring systems in order to improve the quality of information; support local innovative projects that can be replicated nationwide; systematize successful experiences that can be shared with other Central American countries; and promote educational programmes to mobilize community groups in the defence of children's rights to adequate nutrition and to a safe environment.

23. Fund-raising strategy. Within the framework of the communication and mobilization programme, initiatives will be developed to encourage support from multilateral and bilateral donors and the United Nations family. In coordination with the UNICEF office in Panama, local fund-raising initiatives will be developed gradually within the private sector. Successful sales of greeting cards during the past two years will be enhanced through increased understanding of the market and the expansion of sales outlets.

Monitoring and evaluation

24. Given the innovative nature of the country programme, many aspects of the cooperation are not measurable by traditional means. Therefore, another contribution of the country programme will be the identification and testing of methodologies to evaluate changing attitudes, knowledge and institutional practices. The mid-term review will be a particularly important step in this process as it will systematize and gauge the impact of community participation methodologies, and also because of the change of Government scheduled for 1998. In addition, the mid-term review will offer an opportunity to reflect on the nature of UNICEF cooperation in Costa Rica after the year 2001.

Cooperation with other partners

25. In the context of the resident coordinator system and the country strategy note, cooperation will centre on each agency's comparative role. Following initiatives already under way, close cooperation is expected with the following: the United Nations Development Programme (on environmental problems); the International Labour Organisation (on child labour); the United Nations Population Fund (on reproductive health and adolescents issues); the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (on monitoring the rights of immigrant children); the Pan American Health Organization (on AIDS); and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. A special effort will be devoted to developing close coordination of initiatives with the World Bank and IDB which are currently supporting the process of social reforms. Issues of common interest are the quality of primary education, educational alternatives for adolescents, health sector reforms, judicial system reforms, and monitoring and evaluation of social programmes.

Programme management

26. The country programme will be managed by MIDEPLAN, the main governmental authority in the social sector, and UNICEF. A special committee with representatives from these institutions will be charged with the responsibility of approving annual plans of action, monitoring implementation and coordinating programme evaluations on a yearly basis. The Ministries of Education and Health and the judiciary system will be actively involved in the execution of the programmes. The UNICEF office will provide high-level technical advice and support, using short-term consultancies as necessary.

TABLE

LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

COUNTRY : COSTA RICA
PROGRAMME : 1997-2001

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET (In thousands of US dollars)				POSTS a/										STAFF COSTS b/ (In thousands of US dollars)		
	GR	FSF	NSF	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
GENERAL RESOURCES :																	
PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM	1,483			1,483	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0.0	540.6	540.6
COMMUNICATION AND MOBILIZATION	661			661	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	1,606			1,606	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	5	733.4	489.6	1,223.0
TOTAL GR	3,750			3,750	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	3	7	733.4	1,030.2	1,763.6
SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING :																	
PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM		0	2,458	2,458	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
COMMUNICATION AND MOBILIZATION		0	1,064	1,064	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PROGRAMME SUPPORT		0	228	228	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.0	163.7	163.7
TOTAL SF		0	3,750	3,750	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.0	163.7	163.7
TOTAL GR & SF	3,750	0	3,750	7,500	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	5	9	733.4	1,193.9	1,927.3
ADM. & PROGRAMME SUPPORT BUDGET	Operating costs			0.0													
	Staffing				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
GRAND TOTAL (GR+SF+ADM)					0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	5	9	733.4	1,193.9	1,927.3
Number of posts and staff costs:																	
Current programme cycle											1	3	5	9			
At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)											1	3	5	9	733.4	1,193.9	1,927.3

GR = general resources.
SF = supplementary funding.
FSF = funded supplementary funding.
NSF = new supplementary funding.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional.
GS = General Service.
ADM = administrative.

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole.
b/ Exclude temporary assistance and overtime; include costs of United Nations volunteers.